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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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Dear Mr. Secretary:

The proposal outlined in Mr. Dulles' letter dated January 21, 1959 to form an ad hoc working group for the purpose of undertaking a study of the surprise attack/threat and possible measures to reduce this threat has been carefully studied within the Department of Defense. The views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with which we are in general agreement are inclosed.

The Secretary of Defense shares the concern expressed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in regard to measures which would place limitations or restrictions on the readiness of our forces. Any measures which would reduce the reaction time of U. S. forces would in our view seriously jeopardize the security of the United States. There is, however, no objection to studying these measures for the purpose of being prepared to counter similar Soviet proposals.

The Department of Defense concurs with the Western Experts' views that the Surprise Attack Conference should not be resumed until the differences between the two sides on the scope and nature of the talks have been resolved. We do not agree, however, that the resolution of the divergent views should be delayed pending the completion of the proposed study. It is the view of the Department of Defense that the U. S. position in regard to the resumption of the Surprise Attack Conference should be formulated prior to the beginning of the study of this problem and related arms control measures, in order to provide the study group with definitive and positive guidance for their work.

In regard to the Draft Terms of Reference, it is our view that they are so broad and general that the proposed ninety (90) day period would not be adequate for such an extensive undertaking. Therefore, we suggest that the Terms of Reference be made more definitive and the specific purposes of the study be clearly set forth in the initial paragraph. Furthermore, in view of the actions which have occurred in regard to our present disarmament policy, i.e. separating from the August 29, 1957 Four Power Disarmament "Package" proposal the Arctic Zone, Outer Space, Discontinuance of Atomic Weapons Tests and Surprise Attack proposals, there is an urgent need to review basic U. S. disarmament policy, either in conjunction with or prior to undertaking the proposed study. Without firm policy guidance, the work of the study group would be greatly hampered and might therefore result in an unproductive effort.

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It is the view of the Department of Defense that the solution of this problem should be approached in the following sequence:

- a. The review of the U. S. disarmament policy initiated by the Disarmament Policy Review Working Group on April 9, 1958 be completed as expeditiously as possible.
- b. The U. S. position in regard to the purpose, scope and forum for the resumption of the Surprise Attack Talks should be formulated prior to the initiation of the preparatory work for this meeting.
- c. An ad hoc working group should be established to undertake preparations for disarmament discussion including the resumption of the Surprise Attack Conference in accordance with the inclosed Terms of Reference.

In regard to the ad hoc working group staff, it is the view of the Department of Defense that the initial composition of this group should consist primarily of representatives from the Department of Defense and the Department of State. As the study progresses and if the need develops for representatives from other agencies, i.e. Atomic Energy Commission, Central Intelligence Agency, Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, such representatives as might be required could be requested. This procedure is recommended first, because disarmament including surprise attack is primarily a military and political problem and second, to expedite its work the study group should be kept small.

We have noted your proposal that Mr. William C. Foster, who served as head of the U. S. Delegation to the November 10, 1958 Geneva Conference on Surprise Attack, be the individual to direct the study. We concur that Mr. Foster's proven ability and broad experience in the military field qualify him for such an assignment, but suggest that actual selection of a study group director be deferred until our two departments have agreed on, and defined more precisely, the area of study.

With respect to the suggestion that the director of the study group have available the services of a panel of consultants, we assume that the members of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Group will be consulted in the selection of this panel.

OSD REVIEW COMPLETED

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For the reasons stated above and in light of the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, it is further recommended that prior to submitting a memorandum to the President the Interdepartmental Coordinating Group meet to discuss possible alternative approaches to this problem and to consider the inclosed revised Terms of Reference.

Sincerely yours,

Signed
DONALD A. QUARLES
Deputy

Inclosure:

Ltr to Sec Def from JCS
dtd 2 March 1959

The Honorable
The Acting Secretary of State
Department of State

Copies to:

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Director, Central Intelligence Agency
Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission
Dr. J. R. Killian, Special Assistant to
the President for Science and Technology
Mr. Gordon Gray, Special Assistant to
the President for National Security Affairs
General H. B. Loper, Special Assistant to
the Secretary of Defense for Atomic Energy
LCDR Richard Paddock (Navy)
Major Herbert McChrystal (Army)
Mr. George Doyle (Air Force)

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JCSM-71-59

2 March 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Surprise Attack Study Group (U)

1. Reference is made to a memorandum, dated 23 January 1959, by the Military Advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA), subject as above, which requested that the Joint Chiefs of Staff evaluate and submit comments on a proposal by the Secretary of State concerning the formation of an inter-governmental ad hoc group to prepare a study of the problems of surprise attack and related disarmament proposals.

2. The recent Geneva Conference of Experts on Surprise Attack was suspended with recognition that revised terms of reference were needed before the Conference could reconvene. The State Department proposes that the U. S. approach on the surprise attack problem should be broadened to include arms control measures. The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that U. S. preparations for a new series of meetings require different terms of reference than those proposed by the Secretary of State.

3. The national security implications of the various arms control measures, that could be considered in a new and less restricted conference on surprise attack, appear to demand, as a first step, a broad U. S. review of disarmament matters from a wider viewpoint than that of surprise attack alone. Such a review would provide a basis for evaluating the surprise attack threat in terms of other threats to U. S. security, and for determining what effect the attainment of safeguards against surprise attack would have upon the over-all U. S. defense posture.

4. The Joint Chiefs of Staff believe that:

a. In view of the actions separating the Arctic Zone proposal, outer space considerations, suspension of nuclear weapons tests, and technical discussions on surprise attack from the August 29, 1957 Four Power disarmament package, there is an urgent need to review existing U. S. disarmament policy for consistency with those actions and national security requirements. The Disarmament Policy Review Working Group, which initiated such a review on 7 April 1958, should complete its action and propose necessary revisions. Within the framework of the revised policy, U. S. positions relative to disarmament measures including safeguards against surprise attack, could be developed by the proposed ad hoc study group. If however, political considerations preclude completion of an over-all review

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of our present disarmament policy, by the Disarmament Policy Review Working Group, within the apparent time limitations, it may be necessary to develop U. S. positions relative to disarmament measures within the framework of existing disarmament policy.

b. The objective of the study proposed by the Secretary of State should be limited to the development of recommended U. S. positions on disarmament measures within current U. S. disarmament policy. The surprise attack problem should be considered within this context. The reverse approach would be unwise since the surprise attack problem is but one element of U. S. disarmament policy. Such an approach might lead to conclusions which are unacceptable within the framework of over-all basic national security policy.

c. Current U. S. disarmament policy does not include limitations on combat readiness of U. S. forces and limitations on deployment or operations. The Study Group proposed by the Secretary of State should restrict its considerations of measures which might place limitations on the combat readiness of U. S. forces to the development of data necessary to counter proposals of this nature that have been or are likely to be made by other parties.

d. The draft terms of reference for a Study Group on Disarmament Measures, attached hereto, should be substituted for the terms of reference for a Study Group on Increasing Protection Against Surprise Attack, proposed by the Secretary of State.

e. In the event that Mr. William C. Foster is not available to direct the Study Group, a senior U. S. Military Officer should be appointed. However, if Mr. William C. Foster, or an individual of similar stature, should assume the responsibility of the Chairman of the Study Group, a senior U. S. Military Officer should be designated as the Director of the Study Group Staff. In any event, the consultants should include at least one military officer.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

SIGNED
ARLEIGH BURKE,
Chief of Naval Operations

Enclosure:
Appendix

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A P P E N D I X

PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE AD HOC STUDY GROUP
ON DISARMAMENT MEASURES

1. The objective of the Study Group is to develop detailed proposed U. S. position relative to disarmament measures for possible use by a U. S. delegation to an international conference.
2. The study group will be guided in its work by the following:
 - a. U. S. positions relative to disarmament measures will be developed within existing U. S. disarmament policy.
 - b. U. S. positions on disarmament measures will maintain, as a minimum, the relative U.S. national defense posture vis-a-vis the Soviet Bloc.
 - c. U. S. positions relative to disarmament measures which might reduce the combat readiness of U. S. forces and their weapons systems will be developed only for the purpose of countering such measures should they be proposed by other nations.
3. Specifically, the Study Group shall accomplish the following tasks:
 - a. Identify specific and verifiable disarmament measures which might reduce the likelihood of armed conflict, to include reductions of armed forces and armaments. These measures should be applied to each type of weapons system, together with its using organization; first within limited geographic areas where friction exists or is likely to develop, and then to progressively enlarge geographic

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areas, finally encompassing all militarily significant nations.

b. Design systems for verifying adherence to the measures identified under subparagraph 3 a above. Specify the type, numbers, and source of verification personnel, their organization for verification duties, the conditions required to be met in order for verification personnel to be effective, the equipment requirements, and the initial and recurring costs of the verification systems.

c. Evaluate the possible impact of the measures and systems discussed in subparagraphs 3 a and b above on U. S. national security interests. Assess the effect of such measures and systems on U. S. deterrent and retaliatory capabilities. Identify those measures and systems which are inimical to U. S. national security; those which are conditionally acceptable and the conditions for acceptance; and those which are clearly advantageous to the United States.

d. Identify U. S. unilateral measures which would be required to avoid a reduction in the U. S. national security position relative to Soviet Bloc nations in the event the measures and systems discussed in subparagraphs 3 a and b above, were incorporated in an international agreement and implemented.

4. The Study Group shall be furnished necessary military and technical data pertinent to this study and shall receive all necessary assistance and cooperation from the Departments and Agencies of the Government.

5. The Director of the Study Group shall submit a final report of the work of the study group to the Interdepartmental Coordinating Group by _____ 1959.

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3			
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CONCURRENCE		INFORMATION	SIGNATURE

Remarks:

Bob:

Have you seen the attached copy of the letter from the Deputy Secretary of Defense to the Secretary of State dated 10 March?

JSE

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